



May 17, 2012

Dear Friends,

We hope you enjoy this week's edition of the Newsflash!

Sincerely,

The Firelight Team

(Call for Applications) Synergos Fellowship Program for Civil Society Leaders
(Call for Proposals) Annual Grant Competition for Peace Projects from United States Institute of Peace
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(Call for Applications) Synergos Fellowship Program for Civil Society Leaders

Synergos, the international organization – working with partners to mobilize resources and bridge social and economic divides to reduce poverty and increase equity around the world – is now open to accepting applications for the Synergos Senior Fellows Program. The program offers this fellowship to civil society leaders who are committed to collaborative action to bring sustainable, systemic improvements for the communities they serve.

The Fellowship Program offers peer support in designing, convening and managing partnership processes and institutions; help with methodologies; space for sharing experience; and opportunities for professional growth and enhancing leadership skills.

Who Should Apply?

Civil society leaders who:

Have experience in building partnerships and intend to play a leading role in multi-stakeholder partnership processes to address specific, complex development challenges.

Present a compelling vision for partnerships around complex, systemic problems of poverty, inequity and social injustice.

Have a demonstrable commitment to the participation of and accountability to the community they serve, as well as credibility and legitimacy from that community to speak authoritatively about its issues.

Are committed to learning and enhancing their leadership qualities.

Deadline for Submission: July 1, 2012

For more go to: <http://www.synergos.org/fellows/>

(Call for Proposals) Annual Grant Competition for Peace Projects from United States Institute of Peace

Countries/Region- All Countries

The United States Institute of Peace (USIP) is an independent, nonpartisan, national institution established and funded by the U.S. Congress. USIP's mandate is to help prevent and resolve violent conflicts, promote post-conflict stability and development, and increase conflict management capacity, tools, and intellectual capital worldwide. The Institute does this by empowering others with awareness, skills, and resources, engaging in peacebuilding initiatives, and funding research and applied projects.

Since 1986, USIP's Grant Program has awarded more than 2,100 grants to practitioners, policymakers, scholars, educators, journalists, and filmmakers around the world. When assessing applications in these regards, the Grant Program draws on USIP's extensive experience over the past three decades. The Annual Grant Competition continues to develop the field via grantmaking that stresses innovation. The spirit of the competition remains broad and inclusive: all projects that fall within USIP's mandate are eligible to be considered for funding.

The awards made under the Annual Grant Competition are expected to serve as a catalyst for important progress and as a means for leveraging successful approaches to achieve greater impact.

Eligibility-

- USIP may provide grant support to nonprofit organizations and individuals—both U.S. and foreign—including the following: institutions of post-secondary, community, and secondary education; public and private education, training or research institutions, and libraries.
- American and foreign nonprofit organizations may apply.
- Support for degree work is not eligible in the Grant Program. Inquiries about support for dissertation research should be directed to USIP's Jennings Randolph Peace Scholar Dissertation Program.

- Only one application per competition may be submitted by the same project director.
- Unsuccessful applicants of previous Grant Program competitions may not submit the same application unless it has been substantially revised. USIP will not accept applications that list as participants, consultants, or project personnel members of USIP's Board of Directors or staff. In addition, any application that lists USIP as a collaborator in the project will not be accepted.
- Individuals who are currently working as USIP contractors may not be eligible to apply for grant support. To determine eligibility prior to submitting an application, please contact the Grant Program staff.
- Applications must be submitted in English.

Deadline for Submission: October 1, 2012

For more go to: <http://www.usip.org/grants-fellowships/annual-grant-competition>

(Call for Submission) International Visegrad Fund – Standard Grants

The International Visegrad Fund is an international organization based in Bratislava founded by the governments of the Visegrad Group (V4) countries—the Czech Republic, the Republic of Hungary, the Republic of Poland, and the Slovak Republic—formed with the purpose to facilitate and promote the development of closer cooperation among V4 countries (and of V4 countries with other countries, especially but not exclusively non-EU member states in Eastern Europe, the Western Balkans and the South Caucasus) through grant support of common cultural, scientific and educational projects, youth exchanges, cross-border projects and tourism promotion, and through individual mobility programs (scholarships, residencies).

Projects financed within Standard Grants should fall within one of the following six categories:

- cultural cooperation,
- scientific exchange and research,
- education,
- youth exchange,
- cross-border cooperation or
- promotion of tourism.

With the exception of cross-border cooperation, entities from at least three Visegrad Group (V4) countries (the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia) must be involved (e.g., a V4 organizer and at least two V4 partners); it is advised, however, to include partners from all V4 countries. Any organization or natural person in the world (with the exception of institutions directly funded from state budgets) is eligible for the funding provided that the proposed project has “Visegrad” features.

Deadline for Submission: 15 September 2012.

For more go to: http://visegradfund.org/grants/standard_grants/

(Call for Proposals) DFID Grant for NGOs for Provision of Girls' Education

The UK Department for International Development (DFID) is offering funding to support support NGOs, charities and the private sector who can find better ways to provide education opportunities to marginalised girls in the poorest countries in Africa and Asia under the UK's Girls' Education Challenge.

The aim of the UK's Girls' Education Challenge is to enable up to one million of the poorest girls in the world to enter and stay in school and receive an education which will transform their future.

The first round of funding will be open across nine priority countries: Afghanistan, DR Congo, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mozambique, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Tanzania and Zimbabwe.

Funding of up to £30 million will be awarded through a competitive process to NGOs, charities and private sector organisations (including consortia of organisations) who can demonstrate innovative ways of reaching marginalised girls. These are girls who have either had no access to education or have dropped out of school early and have received limited opportunities to learn.

Any successful application will need to demonstrate new ideas and cost effective approaches to reaching girls in the most difficult circumstances. Proposed projects should complement existing support to education in that country (including DFID bilateral support), have agreement from state authorities and demonstrate sustainability beyond the life of the Girls' Education Challenge. Funding from the Girls' Education Challenge will be awarded on the ability of organisations to deliver results for girls.

A second round of funding, called the Innovation Pilot Window, for smaller scale pilot programmes (up to £2 million) will be launched later this year. Details will be provided on this website by September 2012.

The Girls' Education Challenge (GEC) has a two stage application process:

Concept note stage: The first step is the submission of the concept note form setting out the project idea being proposed for funding. The Fund Manager will assess eligibility and overall fit with GEC criteria, and then invite successful concept note applicants to move forward to the full application stage;

Full application stage: The full applications will be used by the Fund Manager and DFID to assess potential projects and select successful projects for funding.

Deadline for Submission: 8, June 2012.

For more go to: <http://www.dfid.gov.uk/Work-with-us/Funding-opportunities/Not-for-profit-organisations/Girls-Education-Challenge/>

Do you have these policies and systems in your NGO?

Here is part two of a two part checklist of policies and other management systems necessary for NGOs to run effective organizations and mobilize resources for development work. You can click on the links below to know more about these policies and systems, refer samples and identify gaps in your organization.

6. Personnel Policy (see sample)

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of the Personnel Policy is to set down the policies, conditions, rights and obligations of NGO employees subject to their performing of the duties and responsibilities in their respective job descriptions.

From the time of hiring, each employee will have access to this policy, so that he/she can adhere to it with full knowledge and information.

The policies described below may at any time be subject to modification if the Board of Members of NGO deems it necessary. In such cases, employees will be fully informed of the changes made.

1.2 Categories of Personnel

All personnel working for NGO are classified into following types

1.2.1 Employees

Employees designate salaried individuals who, after a probationary period, are given ongoing assignments, either part-time or full-time, and are paid on monthly basis. They will be contracted on long-term basis subject to periodic evaluations and performance assessments. They will have the responsibility towards the day to day functioning and/or in any one of more ongoing/prospective projects of the organization.

All the employees of the organization are classified into categories. These categories are as follows:

1. Management Category:
 - a. Executive Director
2. Professional Category:
 - a. Program Officer
 - b. Researcher
 - c. Finance Officer
3. Support Category:
 - a. Administrative Assistant
 - b. Office Boy

1.2.2 Consultants

Consultants are professional experts hired by NGO on short-term basis only for the completion of specific tasks and assignments related to NGO or one or more of its projects. Separate and limited contracts, defining their job description, timeline, deliverables, reporting procedures and payment details will be issued to consultants. They will be paid on daily/monthly/weekly basis depending upon the nature of their assignment. They will not be considered as full-time or part-time employees of the organization.

For more on Personnel Policy go here: <http://www.fundsforngos.org/ngo-operational-policies/1-purpose-and-categories-of-personnel/>

7. Communications Policy (see sample)

2.1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to control and reduce the communication cost in an effective way. Telephones are the most convenient and fastest mode of communication but for long distance communication, they are expensive. There are other modes for fast communication such as courier, fax or e-mail. And out of these, e-mail is fast and more affordable. NGO prefers to use e-mail for out of station correspondence to reduce the communication costs. Telephones can be used for local calls and in emergency for national & international long distance calls.

Internet service at the office can be used to download and send email and to conduct work-related research.

2.2 Guidelines

NGO provides the following guidelines to its staff to control telephone use.

- a. Telephone users are requested to keep their conversations short in order to keep the cost down and to keep the lines open for other people in and outside the office that need to use the telephone.
- b. In general, employees should avoid using phones for non-official calls and are encouraged to use STD/ISD facilities available outside the office. However, the non-official calls will be billed to employees at prevailing rates. To keep track of such calls, a record sheet is provided to each employee working in the office in order to make it easier to remember to record the long distance calls (STD / ISD). All long distance calls should be recorded on this sheet along with all required information and submit to the finance division each month.
- c. In order to minimize communication costs as much as possible, email should be used rather than fax or direct long distance calls.
- d. Copies of all in-coming and out-going official communications (fax, letters sent or received) should be filed. The employees sending / receiving important e-mails should be responsible to print and file such e-mails. A copy should go in the central file system.
- e. Efforts should also be made to keep fax messages short and to send long documents by fax only in urgent cases.
- f. Regarding international phone calls, the need for the official call should be discussed verbally with the Executive Director, unless exceptional circumstances make this impractical.

8. Computer Policy (see sample)

3.1 Purpose

NGO seeks to effectively manage the computer system for guiding the use, maintenance and security of the computer equipment. Employees are responsible for ensuring that the procedures and policies suggested here are followed.

3.2 Use

Using computer equipment requires particular care because of its fragility and high cost. Access to the equipment should thus be strictly reserved to NGO employees only. Those employees who are unable to handle commonly-used software will be given an orientation by the senior staff on request. At least one NGO employee will be trained in handling minor maintenance of computers and accessories at the office.

3.3 Security

- a. In order to safeguard the computers against viruses, the external drives (CDs/DVDs/floppies/pen drives) that are at NGO office are only to be used. In the same way, no external drive from any source other than from sealed packets shall be used in the computers, unless it is first scanned with a latest anti-virus software.
- b. In order to safeguard computers from viruses, antivirus software has been

installed in the computers. The virus list for this program should be updated on a regular basis. It is the duty of the employee who has been assigned a computer to update the virus list on her / his computer.

c. There should be at least two backups of all important documents. One copy should be on the hard disk of the computer assigned to the concerned employee and a second copy on a CD/DVD kept in the office.

d. The computers of the NGO should normally be used by its employees. Consultants and volunteers should seek prior permission of NGO employee before using his/her computer in the office

3.4 Saving documents in the Computers

In order to streamline the procedure to save documents in the computers and to make it easier for people to find documents and make back-ups of important documents, each employee should have a c:/my documents directory in his/her computer. This directory should be broken down into sub-directories to facilitate retrieval of important documents. Each employee will include a copy of all their important documents to be backed up on a directory entitled backup.

3.5 Back-ups of Documents

In order to safeguard important documents and other work done by the staff, the back-up directory of the employee shall be backed up on CD/DVD once every week (every Friday) and the CD/DVD stored by the employee.

9. Procurement Policy (see sample)

4.1 Purpose

The purchase of goods and services is necessary for the smooth operation of the organization. The aim of the internal control system for the supplying of goods and services is to ensure orders are handled by individuals having skills in evaluating what purchases are required from suppliers offering the best deals, to ensure purchases made do not exceed the budget provided and to ensure purchased goods and services conform with the quantity and price specified in the order.

4.2 Methodology

NGO shall follow certain methods in purchasing goods, equipment and services required for the needs of the organization or its projects. Use of competitive bidding shall be a priority practice. The first criterion in choosing a supplier shall be the lowest bid. However, if a supplier does not provide the required level of service or an adequate guarantee, then other criteria shall also be considered. NGO shall specify in the purchase file the reasons the lowest bid was not chosen.

- For purchases under \$_____, a price survey by telephone of two suppliers will be

sufficient for determining the supplier.

- For purchases above \$_____, a quotation/invoice shall be obtained from three local suppliers.
- Purchases from a sole source shall be explained in the purchase file.

The purchase file shall contain all the documents pertaining to each transaction, i.e. the purchase requisition, quotations, contact information of suppliers purchase contracts or orders, invoices, delivery slips and any other pertinent documents.

4.3 Purchases

Employees making purchases as part of the project activity or organizational work shall follow these mechanisms:

- a. Requisition form – the employee requesting a purchase fills this form, has it approved by the Executive Director and sends it to finance division.
- b. Order form – the finance division issues the order form, after it is signed by the Executive Director. The concerned employee or the finance division will make the purchase successful on the basis of the order form.
- c. Delivery slip – After the purchase has been made, a delivery slip will be issued by the finance division for the supplier, who will sign it and give it back to the finance division.

10. Fixed Assets Policy (see sample)

5.1 Purpose

To carry out its activities, NGO needs material resources. The quality of these resources is dependent upon how they are used. Material resources are in large part durable goods, which need to be well-managed to be maintained in good condition. These goods include stationary, tables, chairs, shelves, computers and related accessories. The Fixed Assets Policy will aim for:

- precise identification of goods that are part of the asset base;
- sensible use of goods;
- periodic taking of physical inventory;
- effective maintenance of goods;
- replenishment of goods when required.

5.2 Procedures

At NGO, the management of material resources is the responsibility of the _____ staff. The procedures involved in managing these resources are:

- receiving and recording goods;
- using goods properly;

- maintaining goods;
- taking inventory of goods;
- disposing of goods.

Material resources are managed by means of records or files.

5.3 Asset inventory

The purpose of the inventory is the physical monitoring of the items belonging to a project. The inventory makes it possible to detect differences between information about goods in the records and the actual state of goods.

Inventory is usually done once a year and is the responsibility of the finance division.

5.4 Procedures

The inventory procedure is composed of the following steps:

a. Creation of record cards on which is found:

- type of item
- description of item
- identification code
- service user or name of manager
- assigned location
- previous placement of item
- notes on condition of item
- record updates
- minutes of physical inventory

b. Final removal of an item

c. Replacement of an item

d. List of annual needs

5.5 Removal of items

The inventory procedure described above permits the identification of dilapidated or defective goods whose presence in office presents more inconveniences than advantages, for various reasons:

- steep rise in operating or maintenance expenses;
- excessive cost of repair;

- any other objective reason.

The Executive Director should give the authorization to take out of service, transfer or dispose of any items, and that should be noted in the book of assets.

11. Finance Policy (see sample)

6.1 Fund Receipt

6.1.1 Sources of Funds

NGO receives funds from the following sources:

- i. Dollar supported project fund.
- ii. Membership fees.
- iii. Income from short term professional services and consultancy assignments undertaken by NGO.
- iv. Grants Donations received from philanthropic organizations and individuals.

6.1.2 NGO Core Fund

The following are identified as NGO's core programme:

- A. NGO's administrative expenses (house rent, utilities, administrative officer, peon).
- B. NGO's Ashreya Shivir Shelter.
- C. NGO's befriending service "Sumitra".

Any programme coming to NGO must allocate some funds to support this core programme.

6.1.3 Signatories to Cheque Books

The President of NGO, its Treasurer and one other office bearer will be signatory to NGO's cheques. Money can be released by the signatures of two signatories. However, any cheque of more than \$_____ will require the signature of the President.

6.1.4 Types of Accounts

The following three types of accounts will be maintained by NGO:

(1) Central Account

All income accrued to NGO will be deposited in the Central Account. The President, Secretary General and Treasurer are authorized to operate the bank account. Two

signatures of either of these officials will be required for fund disbursement.

(2) Savings Account

NGO will keep fixed deposit savings account for its trust fund.

(3) Petty Cash Fund

A petty cash fund of \$_____ is kept to cover payments not exceeding \$_____. The Accountant/Office Administrator will handle this account and is to be liquidated every two weeks.

The President and/or Treasurer will ensure proper handling of petty cash fund through surprise checks from time to time.

For an example Finance Policy go here: <http://www.fundsforngos.org/ngo-operational-policies/ngo-finance-policy/>

For more on this resource go here: <http://www.fundsforngos.org/free-resources-for-ngos/policies-systems-ngo/>

As part of the Firelight Foundation's Capacity Building Program, Firelight provides "Newsflashes" to share relevant resources and information with our active grantee-partners via weekly emails and via post on a monthly basis. We hope that by facilitating access to information for grassroots, community-focused organizations, programming for children and families, as well as organizational development, is enhanced. Past editions of the Firelight Newsflash can be found on our website: <http://www.firelightfoundation.org/newsflash.php>. We welcome your comments, feedback and ideas for upcoming Newsflashes at newsletter@firelightfoundation.org.

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